

## VILLAGE OF SOLDIERS GROVE, CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Minutes of a Special Board Meeting held June 24, 2025. Meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call: Present: Shayne Chapman, Vicki Campbell, Marla Walsh, and Sarah Kemp. Harrison Heilman entered late.

Swamp Project People: Justus Benson spoke on behalf of the group. He stated they would like to continue the testing to get recommendations from the DNR, wants to be able to get permit to start raking and putting in the aeration system. The Village attorney stated that the Village had asked for bank statements, proof of insurance, and past/future plans from the group back in January 2024 and never received anything until recently and only then did they receive only the plans. Justus said that it does not seem right to provide proof of bank statements as they are nonprofit. Proof of insurance is critical, and the Village has not received any proof except for their fundraisers that were held, not for them working on the slough. Justus said he can get proof of insurance for the Village. Campbell asked if their DFI annual report has been filed, because they are delinquent. Justus said that they are waiting for approval to continue work from the Village before filing. The previous festivals were brought up. Justus said the previous president of the Village went down to the park during the last fest and did not say anything about the alcohol sales. Stated a lot went wrong, and it is in the past and moving on from it. Justus stated he has spent a lot of time on this, and got the slough registered as a lake. They want to get the decaying vegetation out of there and get it cleaned up. Chapman said that there was stuff by the slough that the Village employees had to eventually clean up as it sat there for over a month and the workers had to mow around it. Randy Swiggum spoke up and stated that it was piled up wood for the festival that never got used. Village attorney spoke up again and stated that the Village wants to consider the request of continuing the work but wants what was requested back in January 2024. The Village will keep an open mind once all information requested is received. Norine George spoke up asking if the group had reached out to the residents of the Village on their opinions on the project. The village attorney said that once all the information is received, the board can then go down to the slough and look/listen to the group's plans. The 501(c)(3) needs to be brought back to up to date status, proof of insurance and detailed bank statements need to be provided to the board before a decision is made. The Village will also send out surveys to all Village residents asking their opinion on the project.

Phil Carey-Drainage & 3<sup>rd</sup> Street: Phil apologized for his frustration at the last meeting. He stated he has read over the Village's comprehensive plan that was approved in 2009. He stated that he never really has given the board exactly what he is asking to be done, he is asking for flood mitigation, the drainage/storm water on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to be fixed, and the abandonment of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. He brought up how the willow thicket and deadfall was not cleared, Campbell stated that it was not the Village doing the work, it was a group of volunteers that went in and cleared what they wanted. That part of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street has never been improved or maintained, stated that is of no use to the Village as it is a dead end, all the Village does is plow it. Wants the Village to work with the Core of Engineers to fix the levee then fix the drainage and abandon 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. The village attorney stated she had sent Phil an email on May 6<sup>th</sup> in regard to closure of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and flood mitigation, Phil stated he did not receive the letter. Phil talked about the flooding that happened on Baker Creek last year and how it got into his shed, Village attorney stated municipalities are not responsible for damages caused by surface water. The attorney stated that the village did want to help but has been advised not to do so. She said it is a slippery slope effect, meaning it would cause issues with other residents wanting the village to do work, and the village does not have the funds to be doing work on resident's properties. In regard to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street closure, the attorney stated if both neighboring properties agreed, it could be abandoned. The only other way would be if the Village found it to be in the public's best interest to do so. Talked about if the DOT would allow another driveway to be put in. Abandoning the roadway would landlock properties. The neighboring property owners do not want the roadway abandoned. Heilman stated that he sees it is in the public's best interest to abandon. Chapman stated that the tube in the levee does work, there was once a ditch that went from the levee through Phil's property to the creek. Phil stated that the water pools on the back side of the levee on his property. The attorney stated that in the letter she sent to Phil in May, cautions him about building a levee on his east side of the property as it will be considered a nuisance and will cause issues for the properties above him. Harrison stated that if the village abandons the roadway, it would not be a responsibility for the Village to fix the drainage if board votes 2/3. Have to have a 40-day notice before public hearing, so the public hearing and meeting on the abandonment would be August 5<sup>th</sup>. It was questioned if the village was a part of the levee installation. The plan is to hold the public hearing to abandon the roadway, find out if the village was involved with putting the levee in and when it was put in, and will go from there with the information.

Motion by Heilman, second by Kemp to adjourn to closed session, pursuant to Wis. Stats. 19.85(1)(e)(b) for personnel matters. All present aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Campbell, second by Heilman to reconvene to open session, pursuant to Wis. Stats. 19.85(2). All present aye, motion carried.

Motion by Heilman, second by Walsh to adjourn meeting at 8:05 pm. All present aye, motion carried.